

# **CANUTE PUBLIC SCHOOL**

## **FOSTER CARE SCHOOL PLAN**

**DECEMBER, 2016**

## **Canute Public School District Foster Care Plan**

Under the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1112(c)(5)(B) Title I educational stability provisions take effect on December 10, 2016. By such date, each school district shall have a Foster Care Plan developed and disseminated to all stakeholders.

In Section 1111(c)(5) of ESSA, the school district must collaborate with the Child Welfare Agency and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies (CWA) to implement the Title I educational stability provisions. Therefore, each school district shall develop a clear, written Foster Care Plan. As such, the Foster Care Plan for Canute Public School District shall be as follows:

### **1. LEA Point of Contact and responsibilities.**

The superintendent will designate at least one person to serve as the Foster Care Point of Contact (POC). The POC may also be the homeless student coordinator. This designation will occur by December 10, 2016, and shall be updated annually. The name of this person will be turned in to the OSDE through the online Grants Management System by September 30th of each year. If additional staff members are needed to meet the requirements, the superintendent will make assignments as deemed necessary. The POC will work in the best interest of the child to ensure that all educational requirements are being met. The POC for Canute Public School is Sheri Teeter.

The POC will work closely with the CWA to:

- Coordinate with the corresponding child welfare agency POC to implement Title I provisions;
- Lead the development of a process for making the best interest determination;
- Document the best interest determination;
- Facilitate the transfer of records and immediate enrollment;
- Facilitate data sharing with the child welfare agencies, consistent with FERPA and other privacy protocols;
- Develop and coordinate local transportation procedures;
- Manage best interest determinations and transportation cost disputes;
- Ensure that children in foster care are enrolled in and regularly attending school; and
- Provide professional development and training to school staff on the Title I provisions and educational needs of children in foster care, as needed.

### **2. Decision-making process.**

A committee will meet to determine if the school of origin is not in the best interest of each foster care child and the appropriate placement of the child. The committee will be comprised of

the site administrator or representative, the LEA's POC, and a member of the CWA. In emergency circumstances the CWA has the authority to make an immediate decision regarding the school placement, and then consult with the LEA and revisit the best interest determination of the child.

In the event of a disagreement regarding school placement for a child in foster care, the CWA will be considered the final decision maker in making the best interest determination. The CWA is uniquely positioned to assess vital non-educational factors such as safety, sibling placements, the child's permanency goal, and other components of the case plan. The CWA also has the authority, capacity, and responsibility to collaborate with and gain information from multiple parties including parents, children, schools and the court in making these decisions.

**3. The type of documentation or records that should be shared between parties.**

Foster care parents, social workers or other legal guardians will be allowed to immediately enroll children in foster care in the school district without having the necessary paperwork (birth certificates, shot records, academic records, special education records, etc.) This is to help aid the student with a smooth transition into the district. The receiving school district will contact the school district of origin for the records and make adaptations as needed. After enrollment, the following guardianship or legal custody documents shall be provided for verification by the foster family or CWA:

- Power of attorney
- Affidavit
- Court Order

Canute School District will share education records with the CWA that are allowed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other state privacy laws. This allows educational agencies to disclose without parental consent educational records, including IDEA, of students in foster care to the CWA.

**4. Collaborative structure, such as regularly scheduled meetings, in which relevant individuals can participate in a particular process.**

The POC will meet with the site administrator, school counselor, classroom teacher, and foster parent as needed to discuss the progress of the child in foster care and will document the results of meetings. All decisions will be made utilizing a collaborative team approach to determine what will be in the best interest of the child.

**5. The best interest determination document regarding the child's school placement (school of origin or the receiving school).**

Canute School District shall utilize the following sample form from the Oklahoma State Department of Education in making a “best interest” determination for each child in foster care. The final determination as to what is in the best interest of the child will be made by the CWA.

Print on School Letterhead and Individualized for Each Student  
Best Interest Determination Evaluation

Child's Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Current District: _____ Current Site: _____ <i>Student will remain in the current school unless consideration of the following factors indicates a change of school placement is in the child's best interest (check all that apply.)</i>			
	School of Origin (A)	Receiving School (B)	Other Previous School Attended (C)
Which school will better meet the relational needs of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Siblings <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with peers <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with staff  Describe the relationship connections at current school: _____ _____ List strategies for maintaining important connections should other best interest determination be made: _____			
Which school will better meet the individual academic needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted Program <input type="checkbox"/> Career Tech <input type="checkbox"/> EL Services			
Which school will better meet the social/emotional needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Safety			
Which school will better meet the unique needs and interests of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Sports <input type="checkbox"/> Other Student will describe the areas of desired school involvement:			

Which school will best meet the permanency goal and likelihood of reunification with parents or siblings? _____			
Which school is more appropriate for the child's age and length of travel? Explain: _____ _____			
Describe the child's transfer history. _____			
Which school does the student prefer to attend? Explain: _____ _____			
Which school does the caregiver or current placement provider recommends the student attend? Explain: _____			
Identify strategies for successful transition to new school and/or support in current school: _____ _____			
<b>Supporting Documentation</b> Attach any supporting documentation used to determine best interest of child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report Cards</li> <li>○ Progress Reports</li> <li>○ Achievement Data (test scores)</li> <li>○ Attendance Data</li> <li>○ IEP or Section 504 Plans</li> <li>○ Other: _____</li> </ul>			
<b>Determination</b> <i>Based on the information provided and considering the best interest of the child, the team has determined the following school is the most appropriate educational placement for the child:</i> _____ <b>Team Members:</b> LEA representative: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span><i>Printed name</i></span> <span><i>Signature</i></span> </div> CWA representative: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span><i>Printed name</i></span> <span><i>Signature</i></span> </div> Education Decision Maker _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span><i>Printed name</i></span> <span><i>Signature</i></span> </div> Other: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span><i>Printed name</i></span> <span><i>Signature</i></span> </div>			

## 6. Transportation procedures.

Children in foster care will be entitled to transportation services in the same manner as all other children in the school district. In addition to regular transportation routes, the school district will collaborate with the CWA when transportation is required to maintain children placed in foster care in a school of origin outside their usual attendance area or district when it is in the best



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216 East Walk Street • P.O. Box 490 • Canute, Oklahoma 73626  
 580-472-3295 • Fax 580-472-3187

Larry Parrish, Superintendent  
 Kevin J. Merz, Senior High Principal  
 Josh Woodson, Elementary Principal

Child's Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Current District: _____ Current Site: _____ <i>Student will remain in the current school unless consideration of the following factors indicates a change of school placement is in the child's best interest (check all that apply.)</i>			
	School of Origin ( A )	Receiving School (B)	Other Previous School Attended (C)
Which school will better meet the relational needs of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="radio"/> Siblings <input type="radio"/> Relationships with peers <input type="radio"/> Relationships with staff  Describe the relationship connections at current school: _____ _____ List strategies for maintaining important connections should other best interest determination be made: _____			
Which school will better meet the individual academic needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="radio"/> IEP <input type="radio"/> 504 Plan <input type="radio"/> Gifted Program <input type="radio"/> Career Tech <input type="radio"/> EL Services			
Which school will better meet the social/emotional needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="radio"/> Social <input type="radio"/> Emotional <input type="radio"/> Safety			
Which school will better meet the unique needs and interests of the child? Select all that apply: <input type="radio"/> Extracurricular Activities <input type="radio"/> Sports <input type="radio"/> Other Student will describe the areas of desired school involvement: _____ Which school will best meet the permanency goal and likelihood of reunification with parents or siblings?			





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<p>Which school will better meet the unique needs and interests of the child?          Select all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Extracurricular Activities</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Sports</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> </ul> <p>Student will describe the areas of desired school involvement:          _____</p> <p>Which school will best meet the permanency goal and likelihood of reunification with parents or siblings?</p>			
<p>Which school is more appropriate for the child's age and length of travel?          Explain: _____          _____</p> <p>Describe the child's transfer history.          _____          _____</p>			
<p>Which school does the student prefer to attend?          Explain: _____          _____</p>			
<p>Which school does the caregiver or current placement provider recommends the student attend?          Explain: _____</p>			
<p>Identify strategies for successful transition to new school and/or support in current school: _____          _____          _____</p>			

interest of the student. Under the supervision of the superintendent, the POC will invite appropriate district officials, the CWA, and officials from other districts or agencies to promptly arrange cost-effective transportation for the student.

**7. Responsibilities and costs related to student transportation.**

Canute School District will collaborate with the CWA to develop and implement clear, written procedures governing how transportation is provided to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin. The school district will also work with the CWA to reach an agreement in regards to covering the transportation costs. The agreement will cover how the transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of the child's time in foster care. Each agreement can/will vary greatly because the unique needs of each child should be considered in making the decision on transportation.

**8. Clear, written policies that will remove barriers to immediate enrollment and record transfers for children in foster care.**

Canute Board of Education has modified existing board policy FD to eliminate any barriers to enrollment and/or transfer of educational records for children in foster care.



## Canute Public Schools Foster Care Transportation Plan

### Overview

Canute Public Schools (CPS) will work in collaboration with parents, guardians, concerned adults, students, and the local Department of Human Services (DHS), Child Welfare Office to ensure equitable access to a child in foster care's school of origin as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education ACT (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds ACT (ESSA).

Children in foster care will always be allowed to enroll in their school of origin or school of residence as required under both federal and state law.

### Identification

The DHS point-of-contract (POC) will identify children in foster care, who are in need of transportation assistance, by contacting the CPS POC. The CPS POC is identified as Sara Randall, Elementary Secretary.

### Transportation

Transportation for children in foster care will be provided by the foster family, DHS, or CPS utilizing the most cost effective means to do so (475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act.)

If the child's school of origin is a CPS school and the child is placed in a foster home outside of CPS boundaries, the district POC will work with DHS and/or the foster family to determine if the school of origin remains the school of best interest for the child. This determination will primarily take the following into consideration:

- The wishes of the child;
- The wishes of the foster family (according to state law);
- The wishes of DHS;
- The distance and time required for travel;
- The safety of the child
- Any applicable services available at the school of residence vs. the school of origin.

Additional costs for transportation (whether in-district or out-of-district) will be financed through one of the following methods as provided for under the ESSA and federal regulations (ESEA 1112(c)(5)(B)):

- DHS agrees to reimburse CPS for any additional cost;
- CPS agrees to pay for the additional cost;
- CPS and DHS agree to share the additional cost.

Additional costs are calculated by the district Administration Office and take into account the availability of district transportation, the distance of the child's residence from the nearest applicable bus stop, and any related fuel and staffing costs necessary to in order to provide transportation.

The time required in order for the district to arrange transportation varies depending upon a number of factors such as current demand, availability of staff and/or vehicles, and location of student. For this reason, if transportation of the child(ren) for at least one week however, the average time required is usually less than this.

**Reasonable Distance**

While CPS believes that the school of the best interest for a child is most often their school of origin, this is not always the case. Sometimes, the commute time and/or distance is so great that transporting the child would have a negative impact on the child's social and/or academic life. For this reason, CPS provides the following general guidance on what the district considers to be a reasonable commute distance and time.

- Commute distance: 20 miles
- Commute time (one way): 30 minute(accounting for traffic)

**Disputes**

It is recognized that both CPS and DHS will act with the best interests of children in mind; however, since both parties are approaching this issue from different perspectives, disputes will naturally sometimes occur. In the event of a dispute regarding the transportation until such time as the dispute regarding the transportation of a child in foster care the following will be followed:

- The district will provide transportation until such time as the dispute is resolved (ESEA 1112(c)(5)(B)(i));
- The district policy regarding McKinney-Vento disputes will be followed (Policy 4004(IV)(C)).

This plan was created collaboratively through consultations between LEA and Department of Human Services personnel:

LEA Representative

OKDHS Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

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Date

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